

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAB-02 /063 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

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INFO PANCANAL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PBOR, PN

SUBJECT: TORRIJOS MEETS WITH EX-PRESIDENTS

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. IN AN AUGUST 13 MEETING WITH GEN. TORRIJOS, THREE PANAMANIAN EX-PRESIDENTS--ERNESTO DE LA GUARDIA, RICARDO ARIAS ESPINOSA, AND ROBERTO F. CHIARI-- WERE BRIEFED BY FOREIGN MINISTER GONZALEZ-REVILLA AND THE PANAMANIAN NEGOTIATING TEAM ON THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF A NEW CANAL TREATY.

2. AS REPORTED IN NUMEROUS PRESS ARTICLES, THE EX-PRESIDENTS WERE SATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS BUT DECLINED TO MAKE SPECIFIC COMMENTS UNTIL THEY COULD STUDY THE FINAL VERSION OF THE TREATY.

3. THE THREE ALSO RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE TWO OTHER EX-PRESIDENTS, MARCOS ROBLES AND ARNULFO ARIAS, RESIDING IN THE UNITED STATES, URGING THAT THEY BE CONSULTED ALSO AND BE PARTICIPANTS IN THE DEBATE ON A CANAL TREATY.

APPARENTLY, THEY NEITHER REQUESTED NOR RECEIVED A RESPONSE BY TORRIJOS OR GONZALEZ-REVILLA ON THIS MATTER

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AT THE TIME.

4. IN A RELATED EVENT, RADIO BROADCASTS REPORT THAT TREATY NEGOTIATOR ROMULO ESCOBAR, IN A STATEMENT TO AN FEP MEETING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA, SAID THAT THE GOP WOULD ALLOW THE RETURN OF ARNULFO ARIAS AND ROBLES. END UNCLASSIFIED.

5. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT PLANS FOR THE MEETING WITH TORRIJOS WERE ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY BEFORE THE EX-PRESIDENTS WERE CONTACTED PERSONALLY, WHICH LEFT THEM WITH LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO ATTEND. THE EMBASSY DOUBTS THE SINCERITY OF ESCOBAR'S STATEMENT AND BELIEVES THAT THE CHANCES OF THE RETURN OF ARNULFO ARIAS ARE SMALL. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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